

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSUREROUTING DATA

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A network interface connectable to a packet-based data network on which a plurality of different types of payload data are distinguished by network-based packet header data; comprises:

- 10 a plurality of data handling nodes; and
- a routing arrangement responsive to a packet identifier for routing data packets between the data handling nodes;
- 15 in which:
 - one of the data handling nodes is a network processor for receiving data packets from and transmitting data packets to the packet-based network; the network processor being operable:
 - 20 a) in the case of a data packet received from the data network, to detect the type of payload data from the network-based packet header data; to remove the network-based packet header data from the packet; and to associate with the packet an identifier which specifies a route across the routing arrangement to a target data handling node and a data handling operation to be carried out by the target data handling node; and
 - b) in the case of a data packet received from another data handling node and having an associated packet identifier, to detect the type of payload data from the packet identifier; to remove the packet identifier; to apply network-based packet header data in dependence on the packet identifier; and to launch the data packet onto the network.

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Figure 4.